

Message Text

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ACTION HA-05

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 EUR-12 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 /089 W
-----020667 171945Z /45
R 170409Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2974
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SREF
SUBJ: MOTIVATION FOR ESCAPING FROM VIET-NAM

SUMMARY: TDY ASSIGNMENT OF ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE QUALIFIED REFUGEE AFFAIRS OVVER HAS ALLOWED MORE THOROUGH INQUIRY INTO PRESENT MOTIVATION FOR LEAVING VIET-NAM. BETWEEN FEB 22 AND MAR 3, 1978, MORE THAN 100 HEADS-OF-FAMILY OR FAMILY SPOKESMEN WERE INTERVIEWED ON SUBJECT. FOUR BASIC REASONS WERE CITED AS HAVING MOTIVATED DEPARTURES. THESE ARE:
1) GOVERNMENTAL PREJUDICE TOWARDS CERTAIN GROUPS OF PEOPLE.
2) INABILITY TO ACCEPT A FUTURE NOT SHAPED BY ONE'S OWN EFFORTS.
3) NATIONALIZATION OF PERSONAL PROPERTY.
4) FEAR OF GOVERNMENT REPRISALS AGAINST MIDDLE AND LOWER LEVEL FORMER GVN CADRE AND MILITARY.

A SYNOPSIS OF REFUGEE COMMENT FOLLOWS:

1. OFFICIAL PREJUDICE TOWARDS FORMER GVN/U.S.-ASSOCIATED PERSONNEL ("NGUY NHAN" I.E. "PUPPETS"), AND SOUTH VIETNAMESE IN GENERAL, IS REPORTED TO BE MOST OBJECTIONABLE. WHEREAS SRV REGIMENTATION AND COMMUNIST PHILOSOPHICAL MONOPOLY MIGHT HAVE BEEN ENDURABLE TO SEGMENTS OF BOAT REFUGEE POPULATION, BLATANT,
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POINTED DISCRIMINATION WAS NOT. "NGUY NHAN" IS CONSIDERED TO BE A LIFELONG BRAND AND FAMILIES IN CATEGORY RECEIVE LOWEST PRIORITY IN REGIMENTED SRV ECONOMY AND SOCIETY. "PUPPETS" ARE FORCED TO ACCEPT LOWEST LEVEL, NON-LEADERSHIP EMPLOYMENT REGARDLESS OF EDUCATIONAL OR WORK EXPERIENCE. UNDER SRV REGIME THEIR CHILDREN CANNOT RECEIVE MORE THAN 10 YEARS OF EDUCATION AND "NGUY NHAN" FAMILIES USUALLY HAVE MOST OF THEIR PROPERTY CONFISCATED. THEY

ARE CONSTANTLY WATCHED AND HARASSED BY LOCAL OFFICIALS AND THEIR INFORMANTS.

2. NORTHERNERS ARE REPORTED TO RECEIVE PRIORITY OVER THEIR SOUTH VIETNAMESE COMPATRIOTS IN ALL MATTERS OF BENEFIT. AFTER FALL OF GVN IN 1975, MANY SOUTHERN CADRE AND SOUTH VIETNAMESE CONSIDERED AS RELIABLE BY COMMUNISTS ASSUMED KEY POSITIONS IN NATIONAL AND LOCAL ADMINISTRATIONS RESPECTIVELY. THESE PEOPLE HAVE BEEN EASED OUT BY NORTHERNERS WHO NOW HOLD ALL KEY POSITIONS.

3. SOCIETY UNDER NEW REGIME DIVIDED INTO THREE TIER CLASS SYSTEM. NORTHERNERS RECEIVE PRIORITY IN ALL ECON/SOCIAL AREAS. NEXT ARE SOUTHERNERS WHO WERE NEVER "NGUY NHAN" AND FINALLY COME THE "PUPPETS" THEMSELVES. LIFE IS SPARTAN BY TET '75 STANDARDS. GOVERNMENT CONTROL REACHES LOWEST LEVELS OF ORGANIZATION. EMPLOYMENT IS HARD TO FIND. LUXURY ITEMS ARE SCARCE; FOOD IS NO LONGER PLENTIFUL. THESE FACTORS WOULD BE BEARABLE WERE THEY EQUALLY SHARED BY ALL. THAT THEY ARE NOT IS MOST OBJECTIONABLE TO SOUTHERNERS AND LOWLY "NGUY NHAN".

4. SOUTHERNERS, ESPECIALLY "NGUY NHAN" ALMOST THEM, CANNOT PERCEIVE A FUTURE NOT SHAPED BY THEIR OWN EFFORTS. MOST IMPORTANT PERSONAL DOCUMENT UNDER SRV REGIME IS FAMILY HISTORY COMPILED ON EACH FAMILY BY SRV CADRE. DOCUMENT CONTAINS DECLARATIONS FROM FAMILY MEMBERS, LOCAL GOVERNMENT INVESTIGATOR'S NOTES AND COMMENTARY ON DOCUMENTS NOT NECESSARILY ACCURATE NOR BASED ON FACT. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DOCUMENT CONTROLS FUTURE OF FAMILY AND IS REVIEWED WHENEVER ACTION BY AUTHORITIES IS REQUIRED. FAMILY DOCUMENT MUST BE PRESENTED TO PURCHASE COMMODITIES, TO REQUEST PERMITS TO VISIT PLACES OUTSIDE OF DISTRICT, FOR SCHOOL ENROLLMENT, ETC. IF FAMILY HISTORY CONTAINS NEGATIVE COMMENT SUCH AS "NGUY NHAN", CHANCES OF APPROVAL BY AUTHORITIES SLIM OR NONE AT ALL. ONCE NEGATIVE COMMENTS ARE RECORDED ON DOCUMENT, NO AMOUNT OF HARD WORK NOR GOOD BEHAVIOR CAN REMOVE THEM.

5. REFUGEES SAY MAJORITY OF PERSONS FLEEING VIET-NAM HAVE LIMITING FAMILY HISTORY DOCUMENT. THEY SAY THERE IS NO CHANCE FOR IMPROVING ONE'S CONDITION IN VIET-NAM IF ONE HAS A FAMILY HISTORY WITH NEGATIVE INFORMATION.

6. NATIONALIZATION OF PERSONAL PROPERTY HAS BEEN STEPPE-UP RECENTLY BY SRV REGIME. SUCH PROPERTY AS SHIPS, BOATS AND TRUCKS ARE INCLUDED ON GOVERNMENT INVENTORIES. BOAT OWNERS AND TRUCK DRIVERS FEAR BEING DEPRIVED OF A LIVELIHOOD. THIS GOES AGAINST GRAIN OF PEOPLE USED TO BEING MASTERS, OR AT LEAST PART OWNERS, OF TOOLS OF THEIR TRADES.

7. GOVERNMENT CLOSELY CONTROLS SALE OF CATCH/PRODUCE OF FISHERMEN,

FARMERS, AND MANUFACTURERS. PRODUCTS MUST BE SOLD TO GOVERNMENT AT SRV PRICES. THIS LIMITS INDUSTRIOUS ENTREPRENEUR FROM INCREASING PROFIT.

8. MARKETS ARE SHORT OF BASIC FOODSTUFFS AND COMMODITIES. BEST OF FOODSTUFFS AND DOMESTICALLY PRODUCED ITEMS OTHER THAN BARE NECESSITIES ARE SHIPPED TO THE NORTH OR EXPORTED.

9. REFUGEES SEE HAND OF FOREIGN ADVISORS IN FOREGOING ECONOMIC POLICY AND RESENT RUSSIAN INFLUENCE IN GOVERNMENT. THEY NOTE RECENT DEATH OF SOVIET GENERAL MARKED BY FLAGS-AT-HALF-MAST ON ALL SRV BUILDINGS. PRESENCE OF RUSSIAN ADVISORS PERVASIVE.

10. REFUGEES FEAR THAT SRV REPRISALS, HERETOFORE TARGETING MORE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SENIOR EX-GVN OFFICIALS AND MILITARY, WILL BEGIN VICTIMIZING GREATER NUMBER OF LOWER-LEVEL FORMER GVN PERSONNEL. PAST REPRISALS AGAINST MOST LOWER-LEVEL GVN PERSONNEL WERE LIMITED TO SHORT-TERM JAIL OR RE-EDUCATION SENTENCES. CONCENSUS NOW IS THAT SRV PLANS ROUND-UP OF LOWER-LEVEL FORMER GVN-CONNECTED VIETNAMESE FOR MORE INTENSIVE AND PROLONGED "RE-EDUCATION". THOUGH MORE OF A GUT FEELING THAN IMPLEMENTED FACT, PEOPLE SINCERELY CONCERNED THAT HARsher, MORE PERVASIVE REPRISALS ARE PLANNED.

1. OTHER THAN TO NOTE PERSONS INTERVIEWED WERE LARGELY FROM TOWNS AND CITIES AND WERE SOMEWHAT BETTER EDUCATED THAN AVERAGE VIETNAMESE, FOREGOING OFFERED SANS COMMENT FROM INTERVIEWING AND DRAFTING REFUGEE AFFAIRS PERSONNEL.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REFUGEES, POPULATION MOVEMENTS, PUBLIC OPINION POLLS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978KUALA02217
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780119-0935
Format: TEL
From: KUALA LUMPUR
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780356/aaaabusg.tel
Line Count: 151
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: ad9617c5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION HA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
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Review Date: 11 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3293958
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MOTIVATION FOR ESCAPING FROM VIET-NAM SUMMARY: TDY ASSIGNMENT OF ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE QUALIFIED REFUGEE AFFAIRS OVVER HAS ALLOWED MORE THOROUGH INQU IRY I
TAGS: SREF, VM, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/ad9617c5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014